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CALENDAR FOR PRUNING LANDSCAPE TREES AND SHRUBS FOR THE PENINSULA

The following information will guide you through the pruning process. There are best times to prune and we captured those times in this calendar. You can prune dead, diseased, damaged or dangerous plant parts throughout the year. (See page 3) Attend a free onsite pruning clinic sponsored by Extension in February.

January	Prune long branches of forsythia, pussy willow, and other early spring flowering shrubs for forcing into bloom indoors.
February	An excellent month to prune most plant materials. Prune shade trees; trees will "bleed" which will not hurt them. Prune tree and small fruit. Prune lateral branches 1/4" above the bud at a 45 degree angle. Do not cut off the branch collar on trees. (See page 4) <u>Do not prune spring flowering plants</u> . Prune hybrid tea and grandiflora roses to 3 or 4 strong canes 18 inches long by <i>February 15</i> . Prune summer blooming plants such as crape myrtle, vitex, and butterfly bush. Prune santolina back hard; thin nandina stalks and reduce canes by 1/3. Spray a horticultural dormant oil (follow label for temperatures) on plants to reduce pest population. Remove all debris, including fallen leaves, from area. Put 3-4 inches of mulch around plants. Keep mulch off of plant stem (collar).
March	"Rejuvenation" pruning of overgrown broadleaf evergreens should be done the earlier part of this month. Cut well-established plants back to within 12-18 inches of the ground. Fertilize and water. This can be done to azalea (after bloom), camellia, euonymus, evergreen magnolia, gardenia, hollies, ligustrum, nandina, photinia, pyracantha, and other broadleaf evergreens. Check with office on other plants because they do not tolerate drastic pruning. Drastic pruning now will eliminate spring flowering.
April	Azaleas and other spring flowering plants, such as forsythia, are pruned immediately after they bloom. Pruned by renewal method. These plants should not be sheared. Complete pruning by June 10. Mow evergreen ground covers such as English ivy, periwinkle, ajuga, and mondo [at the highest setting > 4 inches].
May	To achieve dense growth on pines, break or cut the new "candles" in half. Pinch annuals to induce branching. Start pinching mums and continue until July 15 for spray types. For large specimen mum blooms, grow 1 to 3 stems per plant and disbud to one bud later in the season.
June	Keep faded flowers of annuals and some perennials picked for continuous bloom. Prune climbing roses immediately after blooming. Keep roses open for light and air penetration.

July	Prune shade trees to shape them and remove lower limbs. Light pruning only. Heavy pruning will cause stimulation and late season growth that will not be winter hardy. Cut back scraggly annuals such as petunia, and fertilize for bloom until frost. Clip sheared hedges and screens regularly to maintain the desired size - always taper their growth from narrow at the top to broad at the base. (See page 4)
August	Disbud mums and camellias. Slow down pruning activities on shrubs and trees. Prune only on a "have to" basis. Late pruning can stimulate new growth.
September	Disbud camellias for larger bloom. Halt pruning on all shrubs and trees; the new growth induced by fall pruning is susceptible to winter injury. Root prune plants to be moved next year, to encourage development of a fibrous root system and reduce planting shock.
October	No drastic pruning this month. Check trees and shrubs and remove any dead or diseased wood.
November	Prune perennials such as phlox and asparagus to the ground to remove dead stalks and attached insect eggs and diseases. Prune back whips on roses to about 4-6 feet; do heavy pruning in February.
December	Lightly Prune evergreens for use as Christmas decorations.
Anytime	Remove dead or diseased wood from any tree or shrub. Prune the weaker of two rubbing or interfacing branches. Take care not to make bark wounds. Remove suckers or waterspouts on limbs or at base of plants. Always use the proper tool and make sure it's sharp. Never leave stubs or ragged cuts. Never use pruning paint; let wound heal naturally. Be sure to leave the branch collar.

For further information, contact your local extension office for the following pruning publications:

Pruning Series		© York County Cooperative Extension James M. Orband, Extension Agent/ Environmental Horticulture (YCE-PRN01) Revised 1999
430-455	Pruning Basics and Tools	
430-456	Pruning Deciduous Trees	
430-457	Pruning Evergreen Trees	
430-458	Stop Topping Trees	
430-459	Pruning Shrubs	
430-460	Deciduous Tree Pruning Calendar	
430-461	Evergreen Tree Pruning Calendar	
430-462	Shrub Pruning Calendar	
422-021	Training and Pruning Apple Trees	
426-820	Small Fruits in the Home Landscape	
426-821	Tree Fruits in the Home Landscape	
430-237	Garden Roses for Virginia	

Pruning Ornamental Trees and Shrubs

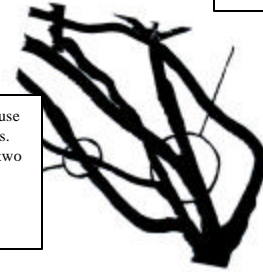
Pruning can be divided into a three step task: 1) determine the reason for pruning, 2) choose a method that will suit the purpose, and 3) prune. Sharp tools and a clear understanding of some basic principles are invaluable aids.

Why Prune?

- **To train young plants** - Young trees need pruning/ training to establish a strong scaffold of major branches and to remove crossing branches and narrow-angle crotches.
- **To maintain tree and shrub health** - Thinning lets light penetrate into the center of the plant, encouraging healthy growth of inner and lower branches. Renewal pruning of older wood encourages new growth that conducts nutrients effectively.
- **To remove dead, diseased, or damaged branches** - This category is the major exception to the rules on when pruning should be done. Diseased areas should be removed as soon as the disease is noticed to stop the disease from spreading in the plant. Remember to cut off the section well beyond (6 - 12 inches) the part that is obviously affected so that all of the disease is removed.
- **To reduce size** - An overgrown plant may be reduced by heading back, or thinning. Select the proper plant to ensure that the mature height of the plant will not exceed the landscape location. This will reduce the need for reductive pruning.
- **To develop a special form** - Hedges, espalier, and topiary forms are created by pruning to change the natural shape of the plant.

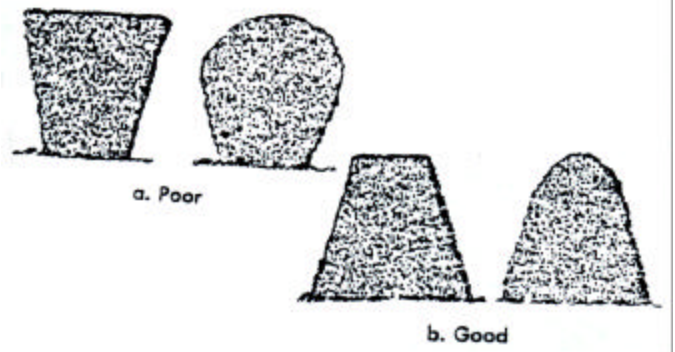
Narrow Crotch Angles are points of weak tissue resulting in splits with heavy loads or strong winds.

Rubbing branches can cause wounds and harboring insects. Remove weaker of the two branches.



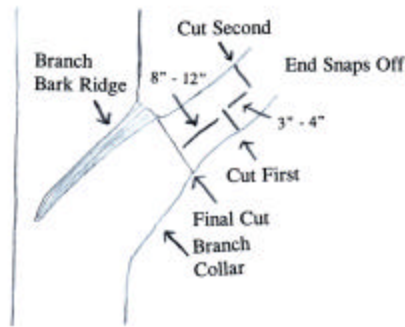
Shaping bushes and hedges

The best hedge shapes are those which allow light to reach the lower part of the plant. Shapes with wider tops than bases shade the lower parts leading to bare patches in the bottom part of the plant. Less formal shapes are easier to keep looking nice.



Pruning Methods

Correct pruning can be broken down into two questions: when? and how? Fortunately a few basic rules apply for almost all plants. Non-flowering and summer flowering trees and bushes should be pruned when they are dormant. February is generally the ideal time. However, spring flowering trees and shrubs should be pruned just after they finish blooming because they set their flowers buds in the previous summer and winter pruning will remove these buds. There are three basic methods of pruning: 1) Heading back, 2) Thinning out, and 3) Renewal pruning. (See page 4)



The resulting wound will heal efficiently and reduce opportunities for rot.

* NO PRUNING PAINT OR OTHER PRODUCTS ON PRUNING WOUNDS

HEADING BACK

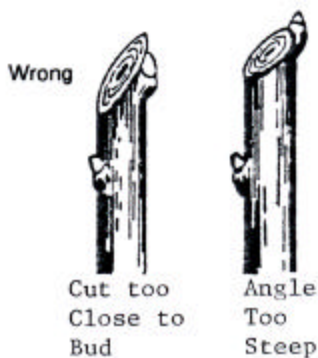
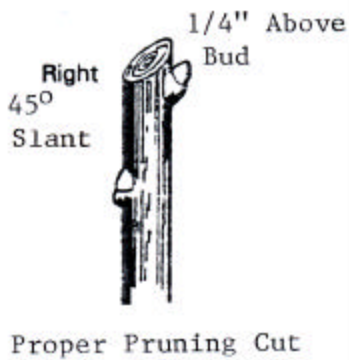
This is cutting of the end of a shoot reducing the plant size and encouraging it to grow fuller. Always cut back to about 1/4" above bud or branch. This pruning method is good for shaping trees and bushes as the direction of new growth can be influenced by where the cut is made. If the end bud is left on the inside of the branch, the new growth will be inward, if the bud is on the outside of the branch, the new growth will be away from the rest of the plant.

THINNING OUT

To thin a plant, remove branches by cutting them back to the point where they join the parent stem. This method of pruning is used to encourage the inner parts of needle-bearing plants to maintain their needles and to promote leaves in the inner sections of other trees and shrubs. Thinning out can also be used to reduce plant density by selectively thinning out crowding branches.

RENEWAL PRUNING

Renewal pruning is the removal of the oldest branches of a shrub by cutting them off at ground level leaving only young vigorous branches. It is most often used with shrubs that grow in a cane form. Most deciduous shrubs can be rejuvenated by pruning branches at about 18' above the ground.



Damaged Branches

Dead Branches



Diseased Branches